

actual fighter planes come in and strafe, and then bombers go in. And they do all this as the final preparation before we put all these fine young people in harm's way.

It is interesting that the Eisenhower went out untrained. They did not have the ability to do it. And now the Washington, another aircraft carrier, is going out untrained without the ability to do it. Why is this? It is because we had a very interesting situation occur. A number of people went in and invaded that base. A United States military base. They invaded it.

Now, what should happen there? Obviously, what should happen, the Marines and the Navy should kick them off and turn them over to the Justice Department. And the Justice Department, at that point, should prosecute them for what they have done.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think a lot of people realize that in the United States there are 48 States that have live fire. What if some environmental group or others went in and took it over? Do we stand by and say they can have a vote, and if they vote right, we would give them \$40 million, like we do there? I hardly believe it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have written the Attorney General, as a member of the Committee on Armed Services, and I have asked the question, what is the Attorney General doing to take these people off, who are nothing more than trespassers? The answer to that is that they have done nothing.

Now, today, in the paper I read where an extreme environmentalist, a lawyer by the name of Robert F. Kennedy, Junior, will go to Vieques this Monday and he will scuba dive and he will play down there to see what is going on. I called today and we informed the Attorney General's office that a law is about to be broken, and I asked what was going to be done about it. So far we have heard absolutely nothing.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if a lot of folks realize that in my years here in Congress I served for 14 years on the ethics committee. For 2 years I chaired the committee. It was my responsibility to talk to Democrats and Republicans alike and say this: You cannot solicit funds from a Federal building, period. You cannot do that. You will be in violation if you do.

I find it very interesting and disagree respectfully with the Vice President of the United States who made the statement that there was no controlling authority because he solicited funds from the White House. If the White House is not a Federal building, my goodness, what is a Federal building in America today?

So I wrote to the FEC, the Federal Election Commission, and I asked them to please explain why the Vice President, in violation, could do that. I knew what their answer would be. They said, we understand the law, but that I would have to call the Attorney General. So we wrote the Attorney General 3 months ago and asked the question,

why is it the Vice President has no controlling authority? And if that is the case, then do 535 Members of the Senate and the House not have exactly that same thing? We could sit in our offices, call anybody we want, solicit money from people, even foreign nationals. Why could we not do that?

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that we have not had the Attorney General write us back. So I have had my legislative director, Mr. Bill Johnson, call them on a regular basis and ask them if they would please respond to our letter. And every day we get the same thing, which is, oh, we are working on that. Does it take 3 months to answer a simple letter asking if there is no controlling legal authority? And if that is the case, 535 of us should have exactly the same rights to do it.

I imagine we will hear about it, maybe in the second week of November. Because, again, the Attorney General is dragging her feet.

Mr. Speaker, if I may mention one other issue. In September of 1996, safely on the South River of the Grand Canyon, the President of the United States put 1.7 million acres into a national monument. Now, what authority did he use to do that? He used what is called the 1906 Antiquity Law. Which is a very short law. It is only two paragraphs. But it says he should consider an archeological or a historic thing.

Now, I would ask respectfully of the President of the United States why he did not do that in that proclamation. And in January of this year, why did he not do it on the strip of Arizona; why did he not do it in Phoenix. Why did he not do it? And now this Saturday, rumor is, and I admit I am paranoid, because I hear these rumors and I know they are going to happen, that down in Sequoia Forest in California there will be another national monument. I would just disagree with the President and ask him to please obey the law this time.

And why is he doing these things? We subpoenaed those papers, and in those papers the White House, the Department of the Interior, and the Council on Quality Control said exactly the same thing; we are doing it for political reasons. My goodness, why in this Nation do we do things for political reasons?

I still remember sitting with President Ronald Reagan who made the statement, "First and foremost we will do what is right for America." Not first and foremost we will do what is right for political reasons. Mr. Speaker, I am just hoping in these three examples, Vieques, the ethics committee, the soliciting funds and the Sequoia Park, that people will follow the law for a change. It would be very refreshing to see this.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF REPUBLICAN-LED CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 6, 1999, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized for 50 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, it has been a busy week and a busy last several months as we have worked hard to address the concerns we hear about back home.

I represent a pretty diverse district. I have the privilege of representing the South Side of Chicago; the neighborhoods of Hegwisch, on the east side in the 10th ward. I represent the south suburbs in Cook County; towns like Lansing and Calumet City, and Park Forest and Lynwood; as well as suburban towns in Will County, New Lenox and Frankfort; industrial communities like Joliet; rural areas throughout the rest of Will County and Kankakee, LaSalle and Grundy Counties. And I hear a very clear message in that very diverse district, a message that we should all work together that we should find challenges.

And whether my neighbors that I have the privilege to represent reside in the city or the suburbs or the country, they tell me that they want those of us here in the Congress to find solutions to the challenges that we face.

I think back to 1994, when I had the privilege of being elected to Congress. I think about the issues of the day at that time, and of course the challenges that we were debating and facing in that campaign. And we discussed solutions to those challenges. I remember back then. It was only 6 years ago that the previous Congress and their mismanagement and the President were running up \$200 to \$300 billion deficits, spending beyond our means. In fact, it was projected that, before the Republican Congress was elected, that deficit spending would total \$200 to \$300 billion a year, as far as the eye could see.

□ 2115

In response to that, the Democratic Congress, working with President Clinton and Vice President GORE, passed the biggest tax hike in the history of our country, placing America's tax burden at its highest level ever, where the average family in Illinois is now sending at least 42 percent of their average income to Washington or Springfield in the local courthouse. That tax burden is too high. And they raised taxes again and they continued deficit spending.

Unfortunately at that time, in 1994, it was clear that they were running the Federal Government on a credit card. They raised taxes and they increased spending. And even though they increased taxes, they still spent well beyond their means, running up deficits of \$200 billion to \$300 billion a year, running up a massive public debt and raiding Social Security to spend on other things.

When we promised change and we made the commitment that when we were given the opportunity as Republicans to be in the majority that we would work to change how Washington

works, balancing the budget and paying down the debt and strengthening Social Security and reforming welfare.

I am proud to say that in the last 5½ years that I have had the privilege to serve in this Congress that we went about doing exactly what we said we would do. We balanced the budget for first time in 28 years. In fact, over the next 10 years, as a result of our balanced budget, we are projected to have surpluses, extra money, of almost \$3 trillion.

We provided for the first middle-class tax cut in 16 years. Three million Illinois children in my home State of Illinois now qualify for that \$500 per child tax credit, \$500 a year that will stay back home in that family's pocket-books rather than coming here to Washington.

We certainly believe that families back in Illinois and working families throughout this country could better spend their hard-earned dollars better at home than we can for them here in Washington.

I am also proud to say that the welfare reform that we enacted over the last 6 years that emphasizes work and family and responsibility has worked. It has succeeded. We now have seen a reduction in our Nation's welfare rolls of one-half.

My home county of Grundy County, Illinois, has seen an 85-percent reduction in welfare; and almost seven million Americans have now moved from the welfare rolls to the work rolls and the tax rolls, changing their opportunities.

One of our greatest successes this past year, we made a commitment of course to change how Washington works by ending what many call Washington's dirtiest and darkest secret; and that is that for almost 30 years Washington raided the Social Security Trust Fund, dipping into Social Security, America's retirement account, to spend on other things.

This past year we put a stop to that, walling off the Social Security Trust Fund so that Social Security dollars could not be spent on anything other than Social Security and Medicare. What a great change in changing how Washington works by stopping the raid on America's retirement account by stopping the raid on Social Security.

By the way, we also started paying off the national debt. In the last 3 years, we paid down over \$350 billion of the Nation's public debt. That is progress in paying off that credit card debt that was run up prior to 1994.

We are now working on an answer to the question of what do we do next in changing how Washington works after we balance the budget and cut taxes and reform welfare, began paying down the national debt and stopped the raid on Social Security.

What are we going to do next? Our agenda is simple. We want to help our local schools. We want to strengthen Social Security and Medicare. We want to make our Tax Code more fair. And

we wanted to continue paying off that national debt.

I am proud to say that the budget agreement between the House and Senate that we adopted this week, the budget resolution, which sets the framework and the guidelines as we balance the budget for the fourth year in a row, sets those priorities.

I am proud to say that the Republican balanced budget protects 100 percent of the Social Security surplus, reserves every penny of \$161 billion, Social Security surplus dollars, so it is off limits to spending for other purposes.

I would point out that last year in the President's budget he proposed spending \$57 billion of the Social Security Trust Fund surplus. We said, no, preserving \$137 billion total of Social Security for Social Security. That is progress. We stopped the raid last year. This year we are continuing to protect the Social Security Trust Fund, protecting 100 percent of the Social Security surplus.

We also in our budget reflect the need and our goal of strengthening Medicare and modernizing Medicare for the 21st century. We reject what the President proposes when he proposes cutting Medicare by almost \$18.5 billion. We stand in opposition to those cuts. In fact, we want to set aside \$40 billion to ensure that our senior citizens in America have the opportunity to have a modern Medicare program which provides prescription drug coverage to help seniors better afford prescription care.

Republicans believe that our Nation's seniors should not have to choose between a trip to the grocery store or a trip to the pharmacy. That is why we set aside \$40 billion in our balanced budget to start a brand new, for the first time, prescription drug coverage for our Nation's seniors under Medicare.

We also implement a plan to pay off the Nation's credit card. In our balanced budget that we adopted this week, we implement a plan which retires the Nation's public debt by the year 2013. In fact, we pay off \$1 trillion of our Nation's public debt over the next 5 years under our balanced budget.

As I said earlier, we already paid off well over \$300 billion of our Nation's public debt over the last 3 years.

Our balanced budget also promote tax fairness, tax fairness for working women, tax fairness for working families, tax fairness for farmers and small business people, as well as our seniors.

Our balanced budget, of course, implements our effort to wipe out the marriage tax penalty, provides small business tax relief to help make college and education more affordable for families, and also to make our health care system more accessible.

We also strengthen support with our goal of strengthening our local schools. We increase funding for elementary and secondary education by 9.4 percent, a significant boost in funding, more

than three times the rate of inflation for elementary and secondary education. And we also make special education a priority, increasing funding for IDEA, which is special education by \$2 billion in our balanced budget.

And last, I would point out that our balanced budget also works to strengthen our Nation's defenses. We have to recognize that the neglect over the years of our Nation's defenses has caused a problem where we are having a hard time retaining our talented men and women in our Nation's military, those that we call upon to, of course, defend our freedoms.

When we increase funding for our Nation's defense, we ensure that our military men and women have the resources they need in order to practice and have the supplies and train and also have quality housing for themselves and their families and good pay.

I would point out, we provided a pay raise for our military men and women for the first time in a long time this past year as part of our balanced budget.

What does this mean? What does the Republican balanced budget mean for our Nation's families? Well, in 13 years, we will have a debt-free Nation. In 13 years, under our balanced budget, we will eliminate the \$3.6 trillion public debt. Public debt that was run up over 28 years of deficit spending will be eliminated in about a total 15 years. By the year 2013, under our balanced budget, we will wipe out our Nation's public debt.

If you care about a more secure retirement, which I believe every American does, they care about grandma and grandpa and want to ensure that their mom and dad and, frankly, they themselves have a secure retirement, we began the steps towards strengthening Social Security this past year by stopping the raid on Social Security.

We continue that by preserving 100 percent of Social Security for Social Security. It is the way it is supposed to be. We protect America's retirement account. We also set aside funds to help ensure that our seniors have affordable prescription drugs under Medicare.

If my colleagues care about education and strengthening our local schools, and I find that that is a priority in the south suburbs of Chicago, as well as the city, everyone wants better schools and wants Congress to support our local schools, both public and private, and I am proud to say that, under our balanced budget, we increase funding for education by almost 10 percent and we make special education a priority, targeting waste and fraud, and ensuring that savings goes into the classroom to help our young people.

And if you care about health care and if you are anxious that we find a cure for cancer and other life-threatening diseases, I am proud to say that our balanced budget increases funding for basic research, seeking cures for cancer, Alzheimer's, AIDS, and diabetes.

Last, as I mentioned earlier, when it comes to our Nation's defense, we want

a safer world. And that is why defense is a priority under our balanced budget.

I would like to take a few minutes now just to talk about some specific items on our agenda of strengthening our local schools, making the Tax Code more fair, paying down the national debt, and strengthening Medicare and Social Security, by just talking about a couple items of tax fairness, a couple of items that means so much to millions of Americans. I am proud to say that this House, under the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) has acted on the need to bring fairness to our Tax Code.

I would like to take a minute and introduce a couple from my district, Shad and Michelle Hallihan. They are public school teachers in Joliet, Illinois. Shad and Michelle are living in Joliet. They are in their mid to late twenties now. They just had a baby. And they, like 25 million married, working couples, suffer something called the marriage tax penalty.

I have often been asked in the union halls and VFW posts and coffee shops and grain elevators in the district that I represent, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code married, working couples, couples with two incomes where the husband and wife are both in the workforce, pay higher taxes just because they are married?

And that is true. And I agree, it is not right. In fact, for Shad and Michelle Hallihan, they suffer basically the average marriage tax penalty of \$1,400. Now, here in Washington, there are folks that scoff and say, what is \$1,400? No big deal, they probably do not need that money. But for Shad and Michelle, \$1,400 is a washer and a dryer, it is a year's tuition at Joliet Junior College or community college in Joliet, it is 3 months of day-care at the local child care center if they want to use day-care for their newborn baby. It is real money for real people like Shad and Michelle.

I am proud to say that this House passed overwhelmingly H.R. 6, the Marriage Tax Elimination Act. It was supported by every Republican. I am proud to say that 48 Democrats broke out from under the pressure of their leadership and supported our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. That was a great day as we work to bring tax fairness.

And it broke my heart, in fact it probably broke the heart of 28 million married, working couples when the Senate today was prevented from voting on the Marriage Tax Elimination Act. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats decided they were against eliminating the marriage tax penalty and they used parliamentary procedures to prevent our efforts to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for Shad and Michelle Hallihan from even coming up for a vote.

That is wrong. We want fairness for couples like Shad and Michelle Hallihan, working couples who suffer

the marriage tax penalty. And there are 50 million individuals strong who suffer the marriage tax penalty. And today they are wondering why the Senate Democrats stood in the way and said no to eliminating the marriage tax penalty. That is wrong.

My hope is they will change their tune and join with us and make elimination of the marriage tax penalty a bipartisan priority. It breaks my heart that they stood in the way of eliminating the marriage tax penalty for people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan, two public school teachers in Joliet, Illinois, who, just because they are measure, suffer an almost \$1,400 marriage tax penalty.

I am proud to say, though, that another effort, an effort that was spearheaded by the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) as well as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, who during their entire careers in the House have called for elimination of a penalty that affects working seniors.

I have often had employers in the district that I represent who have been anxious to hire senior citizens to work in their store or their business and those seniors have said, I would like to but I am over 65, I am between the ages of 65 and 70. If I go to work for you, I will lose my social security.

When you think about that, today's seniors want to be active longer. They want to work longer. In many cases, their retirement savings and pension plans never worked out the way they had hoped. And so they want to work or need to work.

Unfortunately, if they made more than \$17,000 a year, and that is not a lot of money today, but if they made more than \$17,000 a year, they lost one out of every \$3 of the Social Security benefits were taken away from them by the Social Security earnings limit penalty.

I am proud to say that this House and the Senate voted unanimously to adopt legislation spearheaded by the gentleman from Texas (Chairman ARCHER) and the gentleman interest Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) which wiped out the Social Security earnings limit so that seniors today can work after they reach the age of 65, can keep their Social Security benefits, particularly recognizing they already had a lifetime of working and had already contributed over a lifetime of Social Security and they got what they deserve thanks to our legislation.

I am proud to say that last Friday the President signed our bill. So the Social Security earnings penalty is gone. The legislation is retroactive, so it means that for seniors who have suffered the Social Security earnings limit penalty that, if they make more than \$17,000 this year, they will be able to keep 100 percent of the Social Security benefits.

□ 2130

That is good news, and good news for our working senior citizens. In fact, there are 58,000 seniors in my home State of Illinois that will benefit from elimination of the Social Security earnings penalty.

I would also like to take a moment just to talk briefly about what is a big priority with many families in the district besides tax fairness. They also talk about the need to strengthen our local schools and ensure that our children today have the opportunity for a good quality education. We are in the 21st century and of course there is no better investment than ensuring that children today have an opportunity to learn and have the skills in today's new economy. Under the Republican balanced budget, we increase funding for education by 10 percent. We have several principles that we are reflecting with our agenda this year and implementing this balanced budget that increases funding for education by almost 10 percent. Of course we make children America's top priority by increasing investment in education. We increase our investment in special education to help the disadvantaged by making IDEA a priority. Principle number two is we believe that children have a right to learn in drug-free, non-violent schools. That is why we passed legislation this week to increase enforcement of gun laws with the passage of Project Exile which establishes mandatory minimum sentencing for those who commit crimes and use guns to commit crimes. We also intensify America's war on drugs, the crippling disease that poses such a danger to America's future. In fact we passed legislation, a special appropriations of \$1.2 billion of extra money to fight the war on drugs and keep more drugs from coming into our country. We also believe that children need teachers and schools and programs that demand and meet high standards. Of course this House has passed legislation which provides increased accountability for local schools to raise test scores and graduation rates, passage and enactment of Straight As legislation. I know the Senate will be taking up this legislation soon. We increase investment in teacher training to improve discipline and education quality with the Teacher Empowerment Act which we passed this past year. We also target waste, fraud and abuse in the bureaucracy known as the Department of Education. Of course we want to make sure that those dollars are saved and put back into the classroom to help children learn. Last, our fourth principle is that children must be better prepared. We have a new economy and as the chairman of the Federal Reserve noted, one-third of all the new jobs that have been created in the last 5 years have been generated by technology. So clearly if we want our young people, the children today as well as our adults who are making changes in their careers to be ready to find good-paying

jobs in today's new economy, we want to ensure that they understand technology and know how to use technology in the workplace and at home. That is why we work to give parents the right to save money for educational opportunities for their child by expanding education savings accounts. That is why we want to ensure that education savings accounts can be used for elementary and secondary students, grade school and junior high and high school students so they can hire tutors, take special classes and, of course, maybe buy a better textbook or maybe attend private or parochial school. That is a choice our parents should be able to make. We also work to expand access to student loans by increasing the maximum Pell grant award for low-income students who qualify. I am proud to say that in the last 5 years, we have more than doubled the amount of the Pell grants for low-income students and today the Pell grant for low-income students is at its highest level ever in history. We also are working to give private companies incentives to donate technology to schools. Many schools, whether poor or rich, vary in their technology that is available, the type of computers, the type of equipment in the vocational programs and of course the business community should be given an incentive to donate surplus equipment, the latest technology they can provide to our local schools to help ensure that our school children have access and understand today's technology. That is why I want to draw attention to legislation that I introduced today to help address what some call the digital divide. I find that many educators, teachers and school administrators and school board members back in Illinois, in the areas that I represent in the city and the south suburbs and rural areas tell me they notice a difference in the abilities and how students are able to perform in the classroom between those who have access to computers at home and those who do not. So that is a challenge. How can we encourage our young people to have access to computers and learn how to use the Internet at home and be ready for the workplace. I am proud to say that several companies, including one which is a major employer in the district that I represent, I have two Ford auto plants, the Chicago Heights stamping plant and the Hegwish Taurus plant in the south side of Chicago are both in the district that I represent, they provide thousands of jobs. Ford is one of those companies that has taken the lead in providing computers and subsidized Internet access for their employees. If we think about that, that is pretty exciting, that everyone, universal access to computers and Internet access for the guy that pushes the broom on the shop floor, the janitor, the person working on the assembly line, the middle manager in the office, all the way up to the CEO, all have universal access under Ford's program. American

Airlines, Delta and Intel are also implementing these programs. I commend those employers for what they are doing, providing digital opportunity for families. Because of the efforts of companies such as Ford and American and Delta and Intel, the children of their employees will have computers at home helping them do their homework and making plans. Of course also families can now stay in touch with their friends and relatives all over the world via the Internet thanks to their employers. It is a good idea, something we want to encourage and support. I was shocked to learn that after this was implemented by these employers that it was discovered that the employees were going to suffer a higher tax. They were going to be taxed by the Treasury Department because they were given a computer and subsidized Internet access by their employers and that the IRS wanted to count that as income and raise taxes on that laborer who works pushing the broom on the shop floor at the Ford Taurus plant or the janitor or the middle manager or the person who works on the line. Now, when we think about it, other benefits provided by employers like Ford, their contribution to the employees' pension fund or their contribution to their employees' health care coverage under our Tax Code is not considered a taxable employee benefit. It is tax free. You as a worker, we all as workers are not taxed for our employer's contribution to our pension, but unfortunately today's Tax Code would tax that Ford auto plant worker in Chicago Heights, Illinois if he or she decides to take that computer home and hook it up so they have Internet access provided through their employer. I am proud to say that today we introduced the Data Act, legislation which I have been joined in sponsoring by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), a Democrat on the Committee on Ways and Means, I am a Republican on the Committee on Ways and Means, it is a bipartisan initiative. Of course the Data Act, our goal is to eliminate that digital divide, to create digital unity and digital opportunity by ensuring that that Ford auto plant worker at the Hegwish Taurus plant does not have to pay higher taxes because they are given a computer and Internet access when their employer wants to help eliminate the digital divide as we work to provide digital opportunity. This is important legislation. I believe it deserves bipartisan support. My hope is this legislation which will help improve educational opportunity as well as digital opportunity for families, millions of families in America, will receive bipartisan support. I invite my colleagues to join with the gentleman from Georgia and myself to join us in a bipartisan effort to wipe out the digital divide, to provide digital opportunity and ensure that every working American, every working family has universal access to computers and the digital divide.

We have some big challenges before us. I am proud to say that this Congress for the fourth year in a row is going to balance the budget again. We are going to live within our means. I remember being called a radical in 1995 because I wanted to balance the budget. I had friends on the other side of the aisle who said that we were extreme and radical because we wanted to balance the budget. I remember those days. Now everybody takes credit for it. But the bottom line is over the last 6 years, we have changed how Washington works. I am really proud of that, proud to say that we balanced the budget for the first time in 28 years and 3 years later we are going to balance it for the fourth year in a row. We have all this extra money in the surplus that we are arguing over what to do with it. That is progress. We cut taxes for the middle class for the first time in 16 years. Not since Ronald Reagan was President had the middle class received a tax cut to help them keep more of what they earned. As I pointed out earlier, 3 million Illinois children qualify for that \$500 per child tax credit. That is \$1.5 billion that stays in the Land of Lincoln rather than coming to the District of Columbia to be spent here. I am proud to say that our effort to change how welfare fails. I remember in 1994 more children were living in poverty than ever before. We had higher rates of teenage illegitimacy than ever before. Our welfare system was failing. I am proud to say our efforts to emphasize work and family and responsibility and give States like my home State of Illinois the flexibility and discretion to design welfare programs that meet the needs of the diverse communities that we represent, because we have to recognize that Idaho is different than New York and South Dakota is different than Florida and Chicago is different than Gary, Indiana. I am proud to say that this welfare reform is working, cutting welfare rolls in half and moving millions of Americans into the workplace. We stopped the raid on Social Security. We are paying down the national debt. That is progress. When we think about it, under the Republican balanced budget, we protect 100 percent of the Social Security surplus, walling off the Social Security trust fund. We stopped the raid last year. We are going to protect that Social Security surplus again this year and we will continue fighting into the future to ensure that America's retirement account is protected. We want to strengthen Medicare by modernizing Medicare for the 21st century and that includes providing prescription drug coverage for America's seniors. That is why we allocate \$40 billion, frankly more than the President, and without the President's Medicare cuts, in order to provide prescription drug coverage for our seniors. We plan to pay off the Nation's public debt by the year 2013. When we think about it, it is kind of like refinancing your home mortgage. You used to have a 30-year

mortgage, now we have refinanced it to less than a 15-year mortgage. We are going to pay it off a lot quicker under our balanced budget. We promote tax fairness for families and children and seniors and farmers and small businesspeople. And we eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We wiped out the Social Security earnings penalty. That will help millions of families like the Hallihans. That is again why we want to eliminate that marriage tax penalty so that Shad and Michelle can keep that \$1,400 and spend it back home in Joliet on their family's needs. When we think about it, \$1,400, they have a new baby, that is almost 4,000 diapers that the Hallihans could have spent back in Joliet, Illinois. That is probably a year's worth that they could have used to take care of their child. We strengthen America's defense. We also strengthen support for education and science.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have made a lot of progress, balancing the budget, cutting taxes for the middle class, reforming our welfare system, paying down the national debt, stopping the raid on Social Security. Those are great achievements. I am proud of that. This year we are going to continue that effort, our effort to strengthen Social Security and Medicare to help our local schools, to bring fairness to the tax code and to pay off that credit card by paying down the national debt.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. STARK (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of illness.

Mr. BLILEY (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today after 2 p.m. on account of attending a meeting of the board of regents of the University of Virginia.

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today after 6:45 p.m. on account of official business.

Mr. COOKSEY (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today after 5 p.m. on account of his mother's illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. McNULTY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KLECZKA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BAIRD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAYNE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WAXMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WELLER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELDON of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS REFERRED

Joint resolutions of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S.J. Res. 40. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Alan G. Spoon as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

S.J. Res. 41. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Sheila E. Widnall as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

S.J. Res. 42. Joint resolution providing for the reappointment of Manuel L. Ibanez as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1658. An act to provide a more just and uniform procedure for Federal civil forfeitures, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to an enrolled joint resolution of the Senate of the following title:

S.J. Res. 43. A joint resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President of the United States should encourage free and fair elections and respect for democracy in Peru.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 303, 106th Congress, and as the designee of the majority leader, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDI). Pursuant to the provisions of House Concurrent Resolution 303, 106th Congress, the House stands adjourned until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2, 2000, for morning hour debates.

Thereupon (at 9 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 303, the House adjourned until Tuesday, May 2, 2000, at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour debates.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7106. A letter from the Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Termination of Designation of the State of Minnesota with Respect to the Inspection of Poultry and Poultry Products [Docket No. 99-059DF] received February 22, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7107. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Zinc Phosphide; Extension/Amendment of Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions [OPP-300975; FRL-6489-8] (RIN: 2070-AB78) received February 22, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7108. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Furilazole; Time-Limited Pesticide Tolerance [OPP-300968; FRL-6490-3] (RIN: 2070-AB78) received February 22, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7109. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Acrylic Graft Copolymer, Polyester Block Copolymer and Polyester Random Copolymer; Tolerance Exemption [OPP-300970; FRL-6490-7] (RIN: 2070-AB78) received February 22, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7110. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Research and Engineering, Department of Defense, transmitting the Annual Report of the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7111. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting the Board's final rule—Information Collection Approval; Technical Amendment to the Affordable Housing Program Rule [No. 2000-05] (RIN: 3069-AA93) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

7112. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting the Board's final rule—Information Collection Approval; Technical Amendment to Community Support Requirements Rule [No. 2000-04] (RIN: 3069-AA95) received February 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

7113. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Organization and Operations of Federal Credit Unions; Statutory Lien—received February 17, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

7114. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Supervisory Committee Audits and Verifications—received February 17, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

7115. A letter from the Chairperson, National Council On Disability, transmitting a report entitled, "Back to School on Civil Rights: Advancing the Federal Commitment to Leave No Child Behind"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

7116. A letter from the Secretary of Education, transmitting the Twenty-first Annual Report on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.